

Message Text

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TAGS: PFOR, CH, AS

SUBJECT: WHITLAM-MAO CONVERSATION

CAIRO FOR SECRETARY'S PARTY

1. AUSTRALIAN EMBOFF BRIEFED DEPTOFFS NOVEMBER 6
ON PM WHITLAM'S HOUR AND A HALF-LONG CONVERSATION WITH
MAO NOVEMBER 2. BRIEFING BASED ON TELEGRAM FROM
AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY IN PEKING, BUT HE DID NOT PROVIDE
COPY.

2. AUSTRALIANS FOUND MAO MENTALLY ALERT, ABLE TO STAND
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AND WALK BY HIMSELF, BUT FRAIL. MUCH OF CONVERSATION

WAS NON-SUBSTANTIVE, WITH MAO ASKING QUESTIONS ON SUBJECTS AS FAR AFIELD AS DARWINISM AND AUSTRALIAN FLORA AND FAUNA AS WELL AS VARIOUS ASPECTS OF AUSTRALIA'S FOREIGN RELATIONS. MAO'S HEALTH CAME UP IN DISCUSSION OF REVOLUTIONARY SUCCESSION IN CHINA. MAO SAID "MY BODY IS RIDDLED WITH DISEASE." CHOU SUPPLIED THE CLARIFICATION THAT MAO "HAS RHEUMATISM IN HIS KNEES" BUT MAO CONCLUDED "I HAVE AN APPOINTMENT WITH GOD."

3. CHOU EN-LAI WAS DESCRIBED AS "COAXING" AND "SHEPARDING" MAO, YET VERY DEFERENTIAL (CHOU FOR EXAMPLE SAYING THAT AS A YOUNG MAN HE HAD MADE SOME SERIOUS MISTAKES IN THE PARTY MOVEMENT OF THE 20'S).

4. WANG HUNG-WEN DID NOT CONTRIBUTE MUCH TO THE DISCUSSION, BUT TOOK CARE TO CORRECT WHITLAM'S IMPRESSION THAT HE WAS NEWCOMER TO THE REVOLUTION. HE GAVE HIS AGE AS 38, INDICATED HE HAD BEEN AROUND A LONG TIME AS MAO AND CHOU CARRIED ON THEIR REVOLUTIONARY WORKS. WANG, MAO AND CHOU ALL POINTED OUT THAT THERE WERE "MANY" (REVOLUTIONARY SUCCESSORS) LIKE WANG. PM ASKED MAO WHERE HE HAD "FOUND" WANG; MAO SAID HE DIDN'T KNOW.

5. AUSTRALIAN EMBOFF SAID THERE WERE ALSO EXCHANGES, AS FOLLOWS, ON OTHER SUBJECTS.

6. NUCLEAR ISSUES: MAO BEGAN CONVERSATION BY ASKING IF NUCLEAR TESTING ISSUES HAD BEEN RAISED IN TALKS WITH CHOU. NOTING PROTESTS BY AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND AND JAPAN OVER NUCLEAR TESTING, MAO SUGGESTED AUSTRALIAN PROTESTS WERE OF ROUTINE NATURE. WHITLAM SET HIM STRAIGHT ON THIS. MAO DISAGREED WITH WHITLAM'S REMARK THAT CHINA FACED A GREATER NUCLEAR THREAT THAN FRANCE AND SAID FRANCE THREATENED BY SOVIET UNION AND MUST DEVELOP AN INDEPENDENT NUCLEAR CAPACITY.

7. TAIWAN: GENERAL LINE WAS THAT CHINA WOULD HAVE TO "WAIT AND SEE," BUT WAS IN "NO HURRY" ABOUT RESOLUTION OF THE TAIWAN ISSUE. MAO SAID THAT THE TWO MILLION MAINLANDERS HAD THE GREATEST PROBLEM; HE WOULD LIKE TO
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SEE THEM REUNITED WITH THE MAINLAND. THEIR CHILDREN HAD BECOME TAIWANESE. WHEN WHITLAM ASKED WHETHER THESE CHILDREN MIGHT NOT BE MORE INTERESTED IN REUNIFICATION THAN THEIR PARENTS, MAO'S COMMENT WAS "POSSIBLY."

8. LIN PIAO: ON BEING ASKED WHY TENG HSIAO-P'ING HAD NOT ATTENDED 9TH PARTY CONGRESS (IN 1969), MAO SAID

THE PROBLEM OF LIN PIAO HADN'T BEEN SETTLED THEN. HE SAID LIN WAS PRO-SOVIET, ADDING THAT HIS FLIGHT, AND DOCUMENTS FOUND AFTERWARDS, PROVED THIS. HE AND LIN, MAO SAID, HAD "OCCASIONALLY COOPERATED" BUT WERE "MORE OFTEN OPPOSED."

9. AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY MESSAGE SPECULATED THAT CHOU, WANG HUNG-WEN, ASST.FOREIGN MINISTER WANG HAI-JUNG AND NANCY TANG MIGHT REPRESENT CENTER OF CCP BY REASON OF THEIR PHYSICAL ACCESS TO AND CONTROL OVER THE CHAIRMAN (APPARENTLY DID NOT MENTION SHEN JO-YUN, MFA INTERPRETER WHO ACCORDING TO NCNA WAS ALSO PRESENT).
RUSH

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